

Gloucester Urban District
Council

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health.

1939

Cirencester Urban District.

ANNUAL REPORT of the Medical Officer of Health for 1939.

FOREWORD

I beg to present the Annual Report for the year 1939. Dr. Adams acted as Medical Officer until the end of August, when I took over as Locum for the duration of the war.

The Birth Rate was a high one, the standard Death Rate very low, and the Infant rate, lower still.

REGINALD GREEN, M.D., D.P.H.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	..	...	...	...	...	5,844
Population (Census 1931)	...	...	...	...	...	7,203
and estimated 1939	...	...	...	...	...	9,142
Number of inhabited houses (Census 1931)						1,886
(end of 1939)						2,924
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	£64,893
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	...	...	£234/1/6

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

		M.	F.	Total
LIVE BIRTHS	...	92	82	174
Legitimate	...	89	77	166
Illegitimate	...	3	5	8

Birth Rate (R.G.) 20.1

STILL BIRTHS

Legitimate	...	5	1	6
Illegitimate	...	—	—	—

Rate per 1000 population, 0.65

DEATHS	...	...	62	64	126
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Death Rate (R.G.) 14.1

Standard ... 11.1

Number of Women dying in, or in
consequence of childbirth...from sepsis Nil
from other causes 1

Deaths of Infants under one year of age
per 1000 births:—

Legitimate, 24 ; Illegitimate, Nil ; Total, 23

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	17
„ „ Measles	...	...	Nil
„ „ Whooping Cough	...	...	Nil
„ „ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)			1

Apart from two bacon factories, one flour mill and one brewery, there are no important industries in the district.

CAUSES OF DEATH IN 1939.

(REG. GENERAL)

DISEASE.	Males.	Females.
Diarrhoea (under 2)	1	—
Influenza	3	2
Respiratory Tuberculosis	1	—
Other „	—	1
Syphilis	—	—
Other Respiratory Diseases	1	—
Cancer	6	11
Diabetes	1	—
Cerebral Haemorrhage	7	10
Heart Disease	13	13
Other Circulatory Diseases	4	4
Bronchitis	4	1
Pneumonia	2	2
Appendicitis	—	1
Suicide	3	—
Digestive Diseases	2	1
Nephritis	—	4
Puerperal Diseases	—	1
Congenital Causes, etc.	3	1
Senility	4	6
Other Violence	3	1
Other defined Diseases	4	5
All causes	62	64

CANCER caused 17 as against 18 deaths in 1938.

INFLUENZA caused 5 deaths.

DISEASES OF THE CIRCULATORY SYSTEM caused 34 deaths.

DEATH RATE:—14.1 per 1000 as to 13.2 in 1938. Standard death rate 11.1 as against 12.1 in England and Wales.

BIRTH RATE:—20.1 per 1000 as to 18.8 in 1938, the figure for England and Wales being 15.0.

INFANT MORTALITY:—23 per 1000 as to 45 in 1938. The rate for England and Wales was 50 (per 1000 live births).

PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Scarlet Fever was rather more prevalent than it has been for some years, although it has been on several occasions nearly as common. There were 19 cases in all, reported, and of these, 7 were males, and 12 females. No less than 16 of these, were at school age, 2 being below, and one well above that age. With one exception, all the cases were single ones per family, but in one council house, there were 3 cases within a few days, and one child was apparently taken ill on the same day that the others returned from the Isolation Hospital. Most of the patients attended the three elementary schools in the area, but no special prevalence in any of them occurred. Nearly all the patients went to the Isolation Hospital.

Leaflets were left at the schools for distribution when required, and these were also left at the homes.

Only one case of Diphtheria was notified, this being a visitor from Gloucester, who was ill on arrival. Three patients were admitted to the hospital, but were found to be negative, bacterially speaking, and were only kept there a few days.

One case of polio-myelitis, commonly called infantile paralysis, was reported in Stratton, in the autumn. This patient was seen by the county orthopaedic doctor, and was treated at the clinic. One leg was affected, and the boy showed marked improvement during several months, when visited.

Six reported cases of Pneumonia, including 4 adults, and 2 children, were received. This disease, under modern treatment, is generally much less fatal now-a-days, but all the same, there were 4 deaths, some of which were apparently not notified. With 4 deaths, the total number of cases would probably be not less than about 40, whereas 6 only were notified.

There was only one case of Erysipelas reported.

In November, by a special order of the Ministry, Measles and Whooping Cough had to be notified. At that time, the big epidemic of Measles, which followed later, had not begun, but one case was notified only, near the year end.

Thirteen cases of Whooping Cough were reported, 6 at school age, and 7 below 5 years of age. One child of a few months was infected. There was a small epidemic connected with a large infant school, and a number of visits were made to it, and leaflets and advice provided. The trouble with this disease is, that so many patients never "whoop" at all with it.

Seven cases of Tuberculosis were reported, 3 males and 4 females. One child had glandular disease, and the six adults were attacked in the lungs. One patient was aged 20 years, 4 between 25 and 45 years, and one was 63.

One patient died in a sanatorium, and one left the district. Four cases were admitted to institutions,

under the county scheme. One patient died in the district, but this case was not notified by the medical attendant.

The names of all notified tubercular persons are sent on to the county M.O.H., who forwards them to the county tuberculosis officials.

Practically all the scarlet fever cases were treated at the isolation hospital, and the case of diphtheria also, in addition to the 3 doubtful cases, which did not turn out to be diphtheria.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE CASES.

Scarlet Fever	... 19	Measles	... 1
Diphtheria	... 1	Whooping	
Pneumonia	... 6	Cough	13
Polio-Myelitis	... 1	Tuberculosis	... 7
Erysipelas	... 1		

BIRTHS.

The number of births that occurred in the area, was 174, and of these, 92 were boys, and 82 girls.

This number is higher than last year's total, which was 153. The illegitimate births were 8, as to 9 in 1938.

The births in the first three quarters were very similar, but in the fourth quarter there were 10 more births.

The annual birth rate was 20.1 per 1,000 of the population, compared with 18.8 in 1938, and 15.0 in England and Wales. This is a high rate, but may contain a number of evacuees.

Six still births were registered, equal to a rate of 0.65 per 1,000 population, as to 0.59 in the country.

DEATHS.

The total deaths certified, including those of residents who died outside the area, was 124, and of those 62 were males, and 64 females. In 1938 there were 108 deaths. On this basis, the death rate was 13.4 per 1,000, as to 13.2 in 1938. Four infants under one year died, 3 males, and one female.

There were no deaths of "toddlers," that is, children between one and five years old. At 5—15 years, there occurred 2 deaths, one from pneumonia, and one from appendicitis. From 15—25 years, there was one death, rather strange to say from cancer, probably sarcoma, which fairly often attacks younger people. At ages 25—45 years, 3 deaths took place, 2 from heart trouble, and one from pneumonia. At 45—65 years, 25 deaths were certified, including deaths from heart and circulation diseases, cancer, bronchitis, and suicide. At ages over 65 years, diseases like heart and circulation, cancer, apoplexy, and senile decay head the list.

In regard to causes of death, only three were due to zymotic diseases, namely: one to infantile enteritis, and two to influenza. Only one death was put down to tuberculosis, and four to pneumonia, both infectious conditions.

The two complaints that caused the most deaths, were heart and circulatory diseases, which accounted for 34 between them. All except two, were aged over 45 years, and 24 exceeded 65 years. Cancer, as usual, was a very fatal disease, there being 17 deaths, all except one, being aged over 45 years. Senile decay caused 10 deaths, all at over 65 years of age. Seventeen deaths were due to apoplexy, all at ages over 65 years, except one. Bronchitis caused 5 deaths, all of elderly people. There were 4 deaths, at advanced age, from nephritis, and there were 3

from suicide ; this number being high, and probably connected with war neurosis. Four deaths, three males and one female, occurred at ages under one year, all legitimate. One from enteritis, and three from congenital debility, and premature birth. There were two infant deaths also, of non-residents.

The infant death rate was only 23 per 1,000 live births, compared with 45 in 1938, and 50 in England and Wales, this year. This a very low infant death rate for the town.

The general death rate was 14.3, per 1,000 population, the rate being 12.1 in England and Wales, and 13.2 in 1938, in this place. Owing to the fact that the population is much older, on the average, than that of England and Wales, the standard death rate is 11.1, in comparison with that of the country generally.

There were 21 deaths of non-residents, which occurred in the hospitals, and 3 deaths were not certified.

Only 2 deaths of residents, which occurred outside the area, were certified.

There is one General Hospital, the Memorial Hospital, in the town. The Joint Isolation Hospital is small, and will only take two diseases at one time. Maternity cases can be treated at the Cotswold Special Hospital at Tetbury, run by the County.

An out-station for the treatment of school children does excellent work. The Tuberculosis clinic is held at the Memorial Hospital once a week. Cases are treated at Standish House, now much enlarged, and at the Cashes Green Hospital, Stroud.

Bacterial and Chemical work is carried out by the County officials.

HEALTH STAFF.

There is one sanitary inspector, (a qualified meat inspector), and a building inspector. One inspector was called up during the year.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

The new water works at Baunton are now in full use, and give a million gallons per day of a pure water. Supplies are being given to various camps, and places outside the area. The supply is very pure, and a number of bacterial, and some chemical analyses have been taken. A sample taken in October was remarkably pure, as vouched for by the Clinical Research Association, at 22° only. 2 microbes were found, and at 37.5 c., less than one per ml., were found. B. Coli was absent in 100 ml.

There were 84 new connections to the supply.

No alterations or additions have been made to the public sewers. The backing up of liquid from the sewage disposal works in the Watermoor district has given trouble in wet weather, and the Ministry of Health are holding an enquiry on the matter.

The drainage of Stratton has been under consideration, but has been postponed until after the war.

The sewage works still are satisfactory, and no nuisance is apparently caused by them.

Water carriage is general in the urban parts of the town, but 12 earth closets were re-placed by W.C.'s.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

These are still kept clear of pollution, no action being necessary to this end.

CLEANSING.

Domestic refuse is removed as before, twice a week, to a tip in the Fosse Way.

SANITARY INSPECTION.

(a) Inspections made under Public Health Act ...	...	314
(b) Nuisances discovered or reported :—		
Total ...	...	37
Swine only ...	...	2
(c) Complaints received ...	...	72
(d) Informal or preliminary notices sent ...	...	25
(e) Statutory notices sent ...	...	2
(f) Nuisances abated ...	...	36
(g) Summonses issued ...	...	—
(h) Convictions obtained ...	...	—

Under the Health Acts, 14 inspections were made, 37 nuisances being found, all but one being abated.

In addition, two complaints were received, and 25 informal and 2 statutory notices were sent out. No legal proceedings were found necessary.

SHOPS ACT.

There were 26 inspections under this act. Additional W.C.s were provided in two premises, and heating arrangements installed in a third.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Forty workshops, without mechanical power, and 28 factories were inspected. No action was found necessary under the Acts.

Twelve bake-houses were each inspected once, and lime washing carried out as required under the Act.

Two outworkers premises were visited.

COWSHEDS AND DAIRIES ORDER.

The 11 Cowsheds and Dairies were inspected 20 times in all. Eight Milk Shops were visited on 16 occasions. Alterations were carried out at one Dairy where milk is pasteurised, and several were specially cleansed.

SMOKE ABATEMENT.

Sixteen inspections were made in regard to alleged smoke nuisance and six were specially "observed", but no nuisance was discovered or reported.

BUG ERADICATION.

No council houses, but 5 other cottages were found to be infested with bugs. They were treated as last year, with fumigation and spraying. These houses were later inspected from time to time, and found clean.

All prospective tenants of council houses, have their belongings inspected.

SCHOOLS.

All the schools except one, discharge into the sewers, and have the public water supply.

CAMPING SITES.

No camping sites exist in the district.

SWIMMING BATHS.

There is no change, there being one public open air bath, and a private school one.

HOUSING ACTS.

1. INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR.

(a)	1.	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects [under Public Health or Housing Acts]	300
	2.	Number of inspections made	700
(b)	1.	Number of dwelling-houses included under sub-section (1) above which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Consolidated) Regulations, 1925 and 1937	Nil
	2.	Number of inspections made	Nil
(c)		Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	16
(d)		Number of dwelling-houses [exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	160

2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	23
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3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS.

(a) *Proceedings under Public Health Acts.*

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses rendered fit after service of formal notice :—	
	(a). By Owners	Nil
	(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners	Nil

(b) *Proceedings under Housing Act, 1936.*

Repairs. (Sec. 9, 10 and 16).

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	30
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- (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices—

(1) By Owners	...	...	...	...	6
(2) By Local Authority	...	...	...	...	Nil

Demolition. (Secs. 11 and 13).

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... Nil

Three hundred houses were inspected, 700 separate visits being paid to them. Sixteen houses were certified as unfit for human habitation, and 160 as not reasonably fit. Only 23 were rendered fit by informal action, there being 160 in 1938.

No houses were dealt with under the Public Health Acts, but 30 notices were sent under the Housing Acts. Only 6 houses were put in order by the owners. No orders for demolition of unfit houses were made, and none were demolished. No houses were partially closed.

OVERCROWDING.

PART IV. OVERCROWDING.

(a)	1.	Number of dwelling-houses overcrowded at the end of year	...	...	...	...	18
	2.	Number of families dwelling therein	...	...	...	...	29
	3.	Number of persons dwelling therein	...	...	...	...	51
(b)		Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	...	...	...	...	Nil
(c)	1.	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	...	...	...	...	12
	2.	Number of persons concerned in such cases	...	...	...	...	42

At the end of 1938, there were 6 overcrowded houses, and at the end of 1939, the number was 18, the families in these houses being 29. Twelve cases of overcrowding were relieved in the year, the number of persons dealt with being 42.

The increase in overcrowding was no doubt due to the large number of official and un-official evacuees, that came into the area.

Under present conditions, it is impossible to help this crowding, which will probably get worse. Apparently, overcrowded houses, once relieved did not again become so, during the year.

During the year there were erected 190 council houses, no private houses being built.

ALL NEW HOUSES.

(1)	Total new houses erected during the year	...	190
(2)	New houses erected during the year with State Assistance under Housing Acts :—		
	(a) By the Local Authority		190
	(b) By other bodies or persons		Nil
(3)	New houses erected during the year without subsidy		Nil

MEAT INSPECTION.

Owing to change over, the one inspector being called up, and a new one appointed in the year, the number of animals inspected could not be ascertained, but there were 28,479 pigs slaughtered at the Bacon Factories. Of this number, 4,976 carcasses were inspected, about 20%.

Altogether there were condemned by weight, 32 tons, 16 cwt. of meat and offals. The inspector arranged to be called to examine all doubtful carcasses, at these factories.

